

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6455

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO POUCH

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION USNATO

DIA WASHDC

USNMR SHAPE BEL

COMUSFORAZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 5523

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PO

SUBJ: PRESIDENT AND REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL TO MEET

ON DISMISSING SOARES

REF: LISBON 5501 (DTG 251657Z JUL 78)

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT EANES, AFTER MEETING WITH MARIO SOARES AND CDS PRESIDENT FREITAS DO AMARAL, CONVENED THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL JULY 26 TO DISCUSS DISMISSING PRIME MINISTER SOARES. EANES SAID PS AND CDS POSITIONS WERE IRRECONCILABLE AND THAT THE POLITICAL BASE FOR THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT NO LONGER EXISTED. EANES IS ADHERING STRICTLY TO CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO MOVE CAUTIOUSLY TOWARD THE
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FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT. THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT REMAINS IN OFFICE UNTIL A NEW GOVERNMENT IS IN PLACE. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT TO DECIDE ON SOARES DISMISSAL: PRESIDENT EANES ISSUED A STATEMENT LATE JULY 25--AFTER MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER MARIO SOARES AND CDS PRESIDENT FREITAS DO AMARAL EARLIER IN THE DAY--ANNOUNCING THAT:

--THE PS AND CDS POSITIONS WERE IRRECONCILABLE;
--THE CONDITIONS WHICH SERVED AS THE POLITICAL BASE FOR THE
CURRENT GOVERNMENT NO LONGER EXIST;
--HE WOULD TAKE THE NEXT STEPS CALLED FOR UNDER CONSTITUTION
ARTICLE 147A (BY WHICH THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL ADVISES THE
PRESIDENT ON NOMINATION AND DISMISSAL OF THE PRIME MINISTER.)

2. PS AND CDS ON CRISIS: AFTER MEETING WITH PRESIDENT EANES,
FREITAS DO AMARAL ANNOUNCED THAT THE CDS WAS BREAKING ITS
AGREEMENT WITH THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND COULD NO LONGER SUPPORT
THE GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THE CDS STATE SECRETARIES WOULD ALSO
PRESENT THEIR RESIGNATIONS AND CALLED FOR AN END TO THE SECOND
SOARES GOVERNMENT. AMARAL SAID THE CDS CONTINUES TO BELIEVE
THAT HARMONIOUS PS/CDS RELATIONS ARE IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST.
MARIO SOARES, FOLLOWING HIS OWN MEETING WITH PRESIDENT EANES,
SAID HE HAD NOT YET RESIGNED AND HAD NOT BEEN DISMISSED. HE
NOTED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD NOT SIGNED THE GOVERNMENTAL
DECREES DISMISSING THE THREE CDS MINISTERS AND NAMING THREE
SOCIALIST MINISTERS IN THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT TO ASSUME THEIR
REPONSIBILITIES. SOARES AID THE SOCIALISTS WOULD CONSIDER
FORMING A NEW GOVERNMENT WITH THE CDS, BUT THAT IT WOULD NOT
BE EASY TO REACH AN AGREEMENT UNDER CRISIS CONDITIONS WHEN IT
HAD BEEN IMPOSSIBLE THROUGH QUIET NEGOTIATIONS.

3. OPPOSITION POSITIONS: THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PSD)
ISSUED A STATEMENT JULY 25 ACCUSING THE PS AND CDS OF
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INFLECTING THEIR INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES ON THE PORTUGUESE
PEOPLE AND SEEKING TO CLOSE ALL DOORS TO A "STABLE AND
PATROTIC DEMOCRATIC SOLUTION". THE COMMUNIST PARTY STATED
THAT IT CONSIDERED PS REJECTION OF THE "CDS ULTIMATUM" A
POSITIVE STEP AND DECLARED THAT THE COMMUNISTS WERE DISPOSED
TO EXAMINE POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES WITH THE PS, OTHER DEMOCRATIC
FORCES AND SECTORS, AND THE ORGANS OF SOVEREIGNTY.

4. COMMENT: BY REFUSING TO RESIGN, SOARES HAS FORCED EANES TO
TAKE THE INITIATIVE. AS HE HAS IN THE PAST, THE PRESIDENT IS
ADHERING STRICTLY TO CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS DOWN TO
CITING THE PRECISE CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY FOR HIS ACTIONS.
THE PRESIDENT CAN BE EXPECTED TO MOVE CAUTIOUSLY AND DELIBER-
ATELY TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT. WHEN APPOINTING A NEW PRIME
MINISTER THE PRESIDENT IS REQUIRED BY THE CONSTITUTION TO
CONSULT WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL AND THE POLITICAL
PARTIES REPRESENTED IN THE ASSEMBLY, AND TO GIVE DUE
CONSIDERATION TO ELECTION RESULTS. EANES IS SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH
PSD AND UDP (POPULAR DEMOCRATIC UNION) REPRESENTATIVES LATER
TODAY. A NEW GOVERNMENT PROGRAM MUST BE PRESENTED TO THE ASSEMBLY
WITHIN TEN DAYS OF THE NEW PRIME MINISTER'S NOMINATION. THE
CURRENT GOVERNMENT REMAINS IN OFFICE UNTIL A NEW GOVERNMENT

IS IN PLACE.
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